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Health Officer Update - August 3, 2020

Several people have asked, "Why is Talbot County's new cases of COVID 19 increasing?" There are several reasons. The virus is spreading rapidly throughout the county with the concentration of cases in and around Easton. More cases are in the twenty to forty year age group and for different reasons. One group includes the Hispanic community and these individuals are getting the virus not because of social gatherings as much as going to work where precautions are not taken to keep employees safe from infection, car-pooling to work often for many miles, and living with more than one family to a household. Another group is young and looking for a party, an event gathering, or a crowded bar and are not wearing masks or practicing social distancing.

Talbot County has seen a higher percentage of cases in the group below 20 years of age. Initially Maryland and Talbot County had 7 to 8% of cases in this age group. Both have increased over the past four weeks with MD cumulative being 9.7% and Talbot's being about 19%. Why is Talbot County higher in this age group? We have tested over twenty percent of the population which is greater than many counties. We have tested many children through our contact tracing efforts as contacts of known cases. We have persisted in using nasopharyngeal swabs instead of switching to nasal swabs because we believe we get the NP swabs are better at picking up positive cases. With this high rate of testing our positivity rate is one of the highest which means we truly have a lot of cases of COVID 19. Many do not realize that the young may be asymptomatic more often than adults, but they still spread the virus to adults and seniors and some still become seriously ill. Last week we had three cases in a nursing home.

But we can't blame all this on the young. We have all ages refusing to wear masks and refusing to decrease their socialization activities whether at their home or at the clubhouse or yacht club. We are a divided nation, state, and county without commitment to a pandemic plan, without trust of the messages or messengers, without a willingness of the majority to work together for the common good of their community, state or country.

Several have asked for a more detailed breakout of cases. Below is data from Maryland Department of Health. MDH does not provide this breakout for each county and when Talbot needs the data we have to manually go through all cases to get the answer.

10-Year Age Breakdowns (New and Cumulative):

Age Groups	New Cases	% of New Cases	Cumulative Cases	% of Cum. Cases
0-9	49	5.6%	3083	3.4%
10-19	96	11.0%	5720	6.3%
20-29	201	23.1%	15832	17.4%
30-39	174	20.0%	17180	18.8%
40-49	104	12.0%	15336	16.8%
50-59	119	13.7%	13625	14.9%
60-69	65	7.5%	9415	10.3%
70-79	39	4.5%	5835	6.4%
80+	23	2.6%	5118	5.6%

Jurisdiction (Cumulative):

State and Jurisdiction	Positives	Total Pop Tested	% Pop Tested	Daily Testing Volume	Total Testing Volume	7-day Positivity %
Maryland	91,144	960,637	15.9%	24,507	1,294,065	4.4%
Allegany County	273	12,627	17.8%	375	15,704	2.6%
Anne Arundel County	7,007	80,532	14.0%	2,134	106,400	4.1%
Baltimore County	12,401	137,552	16.6%	4,488	190,971	5.5%
Baltimore City	11,748	118,924	19.7%	3,314	160,961	6.0%
Calvert County	635	9,770	10.6%	245	12,338	4.5%
Caroline County	438	5,508	16.5%	110	6,991	2.5%
Carroll County	1,491	23,789	14.1%	639	31,542	3.1%
Cecil County	655	10,827	10.5%	280	13,978	3.4%
Charles County	1,909	20,465	12.7%	451	27,380	5.4%
Dorchester County	352	7,109	22.2%	58	9,288	3.5%
Frederick County	3,010	43,242	16.9%	1,074	56,789	2.1%
Garrett County	43	3,322	11.4%	126	5,437	0.6%
Harford County	1,853	31,041	12.2%	851	41,178	4.5%
Howard County	3,660	51,982	16.1%	1,212	66,538	3.2%
Kent County	235	4,141	21.3%	51	5,904	0.9%
Montgomery County	17,842	167,050	15.9%	4,812	215,411	3.1%
Prince George's County	22,880	140,026	15.4%	2,623	182,890	6.1%
Queen Anne's County	399	7,080	14.1%	68	9,073	3.0%
Somerset County	123	6,311	24.6%	25	7,308	4.1%
St. Mary's County	931	14,491	12.9%	312	22,113	3.8%
Talbot County	368	7,633	20.6%	97	10,113	5.0%
Washington County	982	30,305	20.1%	598	39,477	2.5%
Wicomico County	1,298	17,669	17.1%	252	24,203	2.4%
Worcester County	611	9,241	17.8%	150	11,183	5.2%